



## 2009 National Christmas Tree Music Program

The lighting ceremony of the National Christmas Tree on the Ellipse, south of the White House, is the beginning of three weeks of celebration in music. Each night during December, musical groups, primarily from the Washington, DC area, provide entertainment for visitors. It is a one of a kind opportunity to enjoy the sounds of the holiday season against the backdrop of the National Christmas Tree and the smaller trees representing all fifty states, the District of Columbia and the five U.S. Territories, model trains as well as the warmth of the yule log.

### National Christmas Tree History

For 85 years, the American tradition of lighting a national Christmas Tree has continued, interrupted only briefly in its history during moments of great national travail.

In 1923, President Calvin Coolidge lit a "Community Christmas Tree" on behalf of "all Americans." A Senator from Vermont, Coolidge's home state, arranged for a cut fir tree from Middlebury College to be erected in President's Park (The Ellipse) for lighting. President Coolidge declined to speak at the ceremony, but he did push a button switch to light a 60-foot tree. Later that

evening, the Marine Band performed in concert near the tree.

Sir Winston Churchill appeared on the South Porch with President Roosevelt for the lighting ceremony in 1941. Both men delivered Christmas messages to the gathered throng before sharing the official lighting duties. By the next year, Washington was under a war-imposed blackout. Lights were placed on the tree in 1942 but never lit, and the tree remained 'dark' from 1942 through 1944.

In 1954, the lighting ceremony was named "The Christmas Pageant of Peace," and a "Pathway of Peace" was established featuring smaller, decorated

trees – one for each state and territory.

In 1963, the tree was not lit until December 22, after a service at the Lincoln Memorial, concluding a 30-day period of national mourning that followed the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The beautiful Colorado blue spruce that serves as the current National Christmas Tree was planted on the Ellipse in the fall of 1978. Brought to Washington, DC by the National Park Service from a York, Pennsylvania farm, this 40-foot tree has proven to be a hardy specimen. In 2003, the tree celebrated a quarter century of service as the National Christmas Tree.

### How To Apply for the 2010 National Christmas Tree Music Program

Musical groups interested in performing in future evening programs for the National Christmas Tree Music Program should visit the National Park Service website at

<http://www.nps.gov/whho> to print out an application. The application must be mailed or postmarked no later than September 17, 2010. For more information, contact President's Park at 202-208-1631.

# 2009 Music Program Schedule

## **Saturday, December 5**

4:00-4:30 pm	Renaissance Revelers Rockville, MD
5:00-5:30 pm	HPSD Treble Makers Hanover, PA
6:00-6:30 pm	Goshen Youth Jazz Band Goshen, NY
7:00-7:30 pm	Girl Scouts of Fairfax Fairfax, VA
8:00-8:30 pm	Metropolitan Fine Arts Center Alexandria, VA

## **Sunday, December 6**

4:00-4:30 pm	Dawn Crafton Dancers Gaithersburg, MD
5:00-5:30 pm	Blue Ridge Thunder Cloggers Waterford, VA
6:00-6:30 pm	Revonda Roberts & Harvest Wind Statesville, NC
7:00-7:30 pm	Country Steppers Dance Team Northern Virginia
8:00-8:30 pm	NWSA Concert Choir Miami, FL

## **Monday, December 7**

6:00-6:30 pm	St. Mary's Concert Chorus & Band Rockville, MD
7:00-7:30 pm	EBC Teen Choir & Handbell Ringers Alexandria, VA
8:00-8:30 pm	Highland View Academy Highlanders Hagerstown, MD

## **Tuesday, December 8**

6:00-6:30 pm	Warren County Middle School Band & Chorus Front Royal, VA
7:00-7:30 pm	Brethren In Harmony Northern VA
8:00-8:30 pm	The Mark Brandt Jazz Trio Manassas, VA

## **Wednesday, December 9**

6:00-6:30 pm	City on a Hill Fairfax, MD
7:00-7:30 pm	Strathmore Elementary 5th Grade Chorus Silver Spring, MD
8:00-8:30 pm	Kendal Conrad Pottstown, PA

## **Thursday, December 10**

6:00-6:30 pm	Lovettsville Elementary Chorus Lovettsville, VA
7:00-7:30 pm	Cashell Elementary School Chorus Rockville, MD
8:00-8:30 pm	Treble Makers Stephens City, VA

## **Friday, December 11**

6:00-6:30 pm	The Lake Highland Academy Singers Orlando, FL
7:00-7:30 pm	Morning Song Music Group Atlanta, GA
8:00-8:30 pm	Mayfield IS Chorus Manassas, VA

## **Saturday, December 12**

4:00-4:30 pm	Upbeat Unlimited Rockville, MD
5:00-5:30 pm	Bull Run Cloggers Manassas, VA
6:00-6:30 pm	The Fairfax Jubil-Aires Fairfax, VA
7:00-7:30 pm	Ox Hill Baptist Church Youth Choir Chantilly, VA
8:00-8:30 pm	Boyle School of Irish Dance Manassas, VA

## **Sunday, December 13**

6:00-6:30 pm	Bell'Arte Singers Severn, MD
7:00-7:30 pm	The Trinity Brass Frederick, MD
8:00-8:30 pm	Miss Mary Ann's School of Dance Point Pleasant, NJ

## **Monday, December 14**

6:00-6:30 pm	Benjamin Banneker Concert Choir Burtonsville, MD
7:00-7:30 pm	Saint Ann's Contemporary Choir Arlington, VA

## **Tuesday, December 15**

6:00-6:30 pm	Olney ES Chorus Olney, MD
7:00-7:30 pm	Cashell ES Choir Rockville, MD
8:00-8:30 pm	Fairfax Baptist Temple Academy Choralairs Fairfax Station, VA

## **Wednesday, December 16**

6:00-6:30 pm	Legacy Elementary Chorus Ashburn, VA
7:00-7:30 pm	Camelot Chorus Annandale, VA
8:00-8:30 pm	Washington Redskins Marching Band Ashburn, VA

## **Thursday, December 17**

6:00-6:30 pm	Pinebrook ES Choir Aldie, VA
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7:00-7:30 pm	Louise Archer ES Select Chorus, Vienna, VA
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8:00-8:30 pm	TBD
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## **Friday, December 18**

6:00-6:30 pm	Space Coast Homeschool Band Titusville, FL
7:00-7:30 pm	Virginia Bronze Handbell Ensemble Falls Church, VA
8:00-8:30 pm	Tetragloria Alexandria, VA

## **Saturday, December 19**

4:00-4:30 pm	Slater's Dance Studio Edgewater, MD
5:00-5:30 pm	Stafford Performing Stars Stafford, VA
6:00-6:30 pm	Todd Thatcher & Tony Favero Ashburn, VA
7:00-7:30 pm	Arena Stage—The Fantasticks Washington, DC
8:00-8:30 pm	Voices In Praise Friendship, MD

## **Sunday, December 20**

4:00-4:30 pm	Cardinal Cloggers Herndon, VA
5:00-5:30 pm	Monikah Washington, DC
6:00-6:30 pm	Steven Gellman Germantown, MD
7:00-7:30 pm	Children of the Light Dancers Fairfax, VA
8:00-8:30 pm	Washington Mennonite Chorus Washington, DC

## **Monday, December 21**

6:00-6:30 pm	Admiral Byrd MS Choir Winchester, VA
7:00-7:30 pm	Celebration Ringers Annandale, VA
8:00-8:30 pm	Tonya Gipson Washington, DC

## **Tuesday, December 22**

6:00-6:30 pm	Endless Mountains Children Choir Thompson, PA
7:00-7:30 pm	TBD
8:00-8:30 pm	Goshen UMC Dance Ministry Montgomery Village, MD

## **Wednesday, December 23**

6:00-6:30 pm	Garvin Freeman & Friends Ypsilanti, MI
7:00-7:30 pm	Camelot Chorus Annandale, VA
8:00-8:30 pm	Strathmore ES Chorus Silver Spring, MD

